

CAYUGA COUNTY GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION SITE

NEW YORK

EPA ID# NYN000204289



EPA REGION 2
CONGRESSIONAL DIST. 31

Cayuga County
Between City of Auburn and Village of Union
Springs

Site Description

The Cayuga County Groundwater Contamination site ("Site") consists of a plume of contaminated groundwater from an unknown source(s). The suspected extent of the plume covers an area of approximately 3,050 acres or 4.8 square miles and falls within three townships, Aurelius, Fleming and Springport. The plume extends from the Village of Union Springs to the Auburn City limits, a distance of seven miles, and has approximately 120 homes within its boundaries. The Site is in an area consisting of residential properties intermingled with extensive farmland and patches of woodlands. The homes in the area use private wells for potable water supply and septic systems for sanitary waste water disposal. The County is currently installing a public water supply and some of the affected homes already have access to it.

Routine testing of the Village of Union Springs' municipal drinking water supply revealed low levels of cis-1,2,dichloroethylene (cis-1,2,DCE) and prompted referral to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a CERCLA/SARA response action on December 4, 2000. Through investigations conducted by the New York Departments of Health and Environmental Conservation and by the EPA, over 300 drinking water supplies have been sampled as of April 2001. As a result of these sampling events, EPA determined that 51 residential wells are contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs), primarily vinyl chloride, trichloroethylene (TCE) and cis-1,2,DCE, in concentrations above the Federal maximum contaminant levels (MCLs). Twenty-four of these drinking water supply wells are contaminated above EPA's Removal Action Levels (RALs) for vinyl chloride and/or cis-1,1,DCE of 2 parts per billion (ppb) and 400 ppb, respectively.

Site Responsibility: This site is being addressed through a combination of federal, state, and municipal actions.

NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 09/13/01

Final Date: 09/05/02

Threats and Contaminants



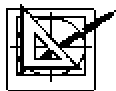
Groundwater at the Site is contaminated with VOCs, primarily cis-1,2,DCE, TCE, and vinyl chloride. Contact with or ingestion of contaminated groundwater may cause an increased risk of adverse health effects from long-term exposure. Exposure to VOCs can occur from ingestion of contaminated groundwater, ingestion of food prepared with contaminated water, or inhalation of vapors from activities such as showering. Treatment systems were installed on the wells of the affected homes and the County is currently connecting some of the homes to a public water supply. These actions are addressing the immediate threat.



Cleanup Approach

This site is being addressed in two stages: emergency response actions including providing treatment systems and an alternate water supply for the affected residents, and a long-term remedial phase which will focus on identifying and controlling the source(s) of contamination and remediating the contaminated groundwater.

Response Action Status



Immediate Actions: Following the discovery of the contaminated wells, EPA initiated an emergency response action at the Site and began delivery of bottled water to the affected residences in December 2000. Of the 51 contaminated residential wells, 24 were contaminated above EPA's Removal Action Levels (RALs) for vinyl chloride and/or cis-1,2,DCE. Under the Superfund Program, if any contaminant concentration exceeds its RAL, EPA is authorized to take immediate, short-term action to address that contamination. As a result, point-of-entry treatment (POET) systems were installed by EPA in homes where the well was contaminated at or above MCLs to ensure a safe supply of public water.



Entire Site: EPA is currently undertaking an investigation to identify potential source(s). In June 2002, EPA began a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) investigation. The RI involves gathering groundwater, surface water and hydrogeological data needed to determine the nature and extent of contamination at the Site and the FS involves evaluating appropriate alternatives to address the contamination.

Site Facts: Following the proposed listing of the Site on the National Priorities List in 2001, EPA commenced a search for parties that might be responsible for the contamination.

Cleanup Progress



As part of the initial emergency response action, from January 2001 to March 2001, EPA installed 54 POET systems in homes where the well was contaminated at or above MCLs to ensure a safe supply of water, and provided operation and maintenance of these systems. Included in these 54 systems, two large dairy farms in the impacted area had air-stripper treatment systems installed. During the fall of 2001, the County undertook an expansion of the public water supply and provided water to 31 of the affected residences. EPA continues to provide operation and maintenance of the systems to the remaining affected residences. The treatment systems continue to provide potable water during the performance of the investigation to identify potential source(s). EPA funded the work plan for the performance of the RI/FS at the Site. In addition, EPA continues the search for potentially responsible parties.

